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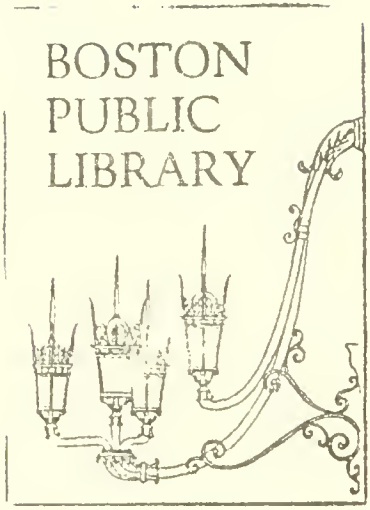
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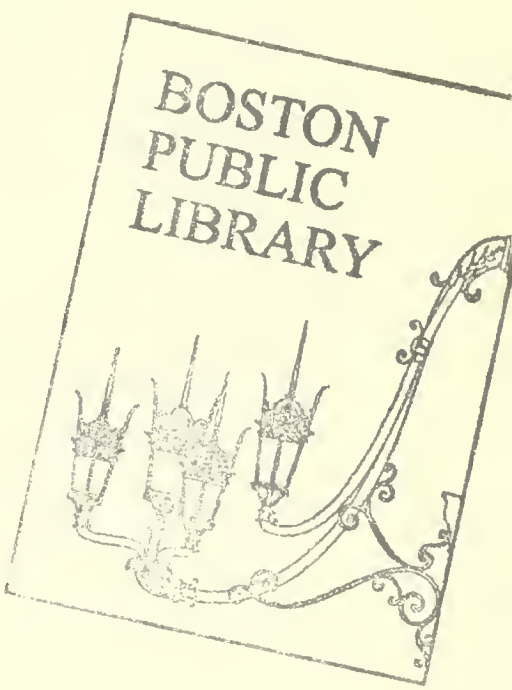
MARKET AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

COLUMBIA POINT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Prepared for

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



January 1964

by

Robert Gladstone & Associates
Economic Consultants
Washington, D.C.

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ROBERT GLADSTONE
AND ASSOCIATES
ECONOMIC CONSULTANTS
711 14TH STREET, N.W. WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005
EXECUTIVE 3-4866

January 15, 1964

Boston Redevelopment Authority
City Hall Annex
Boston 8, Massachusetts

Gentlemen:

The attached report summarizes key findings in our analysis of the development proposals for Columbia Point. The work was undertaken for the Boston Redevelopment Authority by contract dated July 11, 1963. Results set forth in the following are based directly on field investigations at the site, in the surrounding areas and studies of market development patterns in the broader Boston area.

Program analysis phases and alternative plan review preceded the preparation of this report. Involved in these earlier phases were the identification of program objectives; social background and attitude of residents in the existing public housing project; analysis of soil and foundation conditions on the site and cost implications for residential construction; and the advantages and disadvantages of Columbia Point for various types of privately-financed housing. Present plan proposals reflect results of the prior sessions.

Based on our studies, we believe that the uses proposed for the Columbia Point project in the present plan -- developed in stages and on the basis of strategy discussed elsewhere in this and staff reports -- would be marketable. Although important details relating to the proposed uses have not been finalized in this plan, the overall program for the project area development and re-use characteristics as discussed below, establish firm guidelines for the final program on Columbia Point. On the following page, major findings in our analysis are summarized. The text of the report -- in three sections -- covers background factors, residential and commercial uses and development strategy.

It was a pleasure to have undertaken this assignment for you. Should you have any questions or require clarification on any point in the report, please contact us at any time.

Yours truly,
ROBERT GLADSTONE & ASSOCIATES

Robert Gladstone

Robert Gladstone

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

A. Based on our analysis of the Columbia Point site, surrounding area and Boston market area, we believe that the proposed 1,520 new, privately-financed housing units would be marketable in a three phase program.

1. In the first phase 480 garden units built for rent under the 221d3 submarket rate program would be most suitable.

2. In the second phase, the proposed 550 row house units should be built. These should be ownership units under a 221d3 cooperative or condominium program to keep carrying charges to a minimum.

3. Finally, the 490, seven-story elevator units should be built as a minimum 220 for rent or sale, contingent on direct marketing experience with the first and second phase programs.

4. If any of the existing PHA structures were converted to cooperative or condominium apartments, it might be best timed to precede the third phase of new construction.

B. Even if the Family City shopping development proceeds, a small convenience commercial grouping on the site of the present retail units should be planned. Total floor area allocated should not exceed 20,000 square feet with on-site parking at the rate of 2:1.

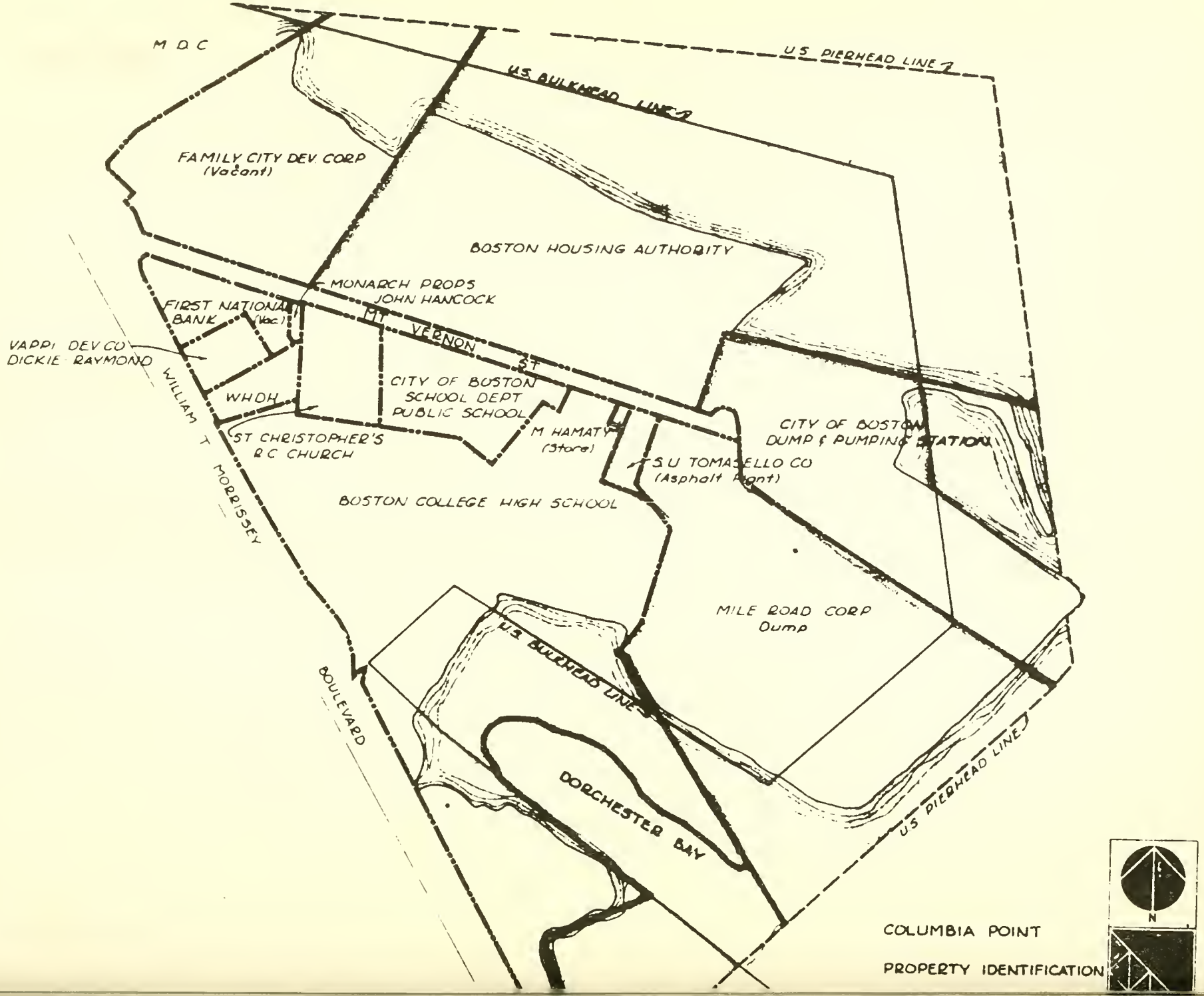
C. Consistent with development of appropriate restrictions to assure compatibility with residential uses, an area of five-ten acres for commercial recreation units -- family restaurant, year round skating, bowling, etc. -- should be planned in the beach-strandway area even apart from private club and marina space.

D. The overall sequence of project development needed to offset present negative features of the area and maximize residential marketability would be as follows:

1. Develop beach, public recreation areas and strandway.

2. Construct phases one and two of privately-financed housing.

3. Complete neighborhood service commercial, regional recreational facilities and residential phase three.



COLUMBIA POINT

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION

MARKET AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

COLUMBIA POINT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Part A. Background

Market aspects of two key uses proposed for Columbia Point are analyzed in this report. These are housing and commercial facilities. Detailed more fully in the paragraphs which follow below, housing proposed in the renewal plan includes 1,500 units in various types, tenure and densities. Commercial activities include, under the proposal, convenience retail sales and service outlets located in the residential areas on the Point and commercial recreation facilities oriented to the broader Boston market and located on the beach near the proposed marina.

Planning Issues

Although housing and commercial units are the two principal uses analyzed here, they are only part of the total program of development projected for the Columbia Point area. Other uses, which are not only important in themselves as part of the total plan "package", also have an essential supporting role in the market feasibility for housing and commercial uses.

> The existing 1,500-unit public housing project on Columbia Point was fundamental in the re-use program. Because a key objective of the renewal project was to make Columbia Point a sounder, more balanced community, the construction of additional, privately financed housing became an important development target.

At the same time a key factor, directly affecting acceptance by potential buyers or renters of new residential units on Columbia Point, is the present public housing development. The bleak appearance of the area; the institutional character of the public housing project; domination of the area and its skyline by the extensive 1,500-unit project are features which must be offset in any new development. Part of the offset would be in new housing units themselves, and the new people they would bring into the area. Other offsets would be in the support facilities and new uses which are projected for the Point and generally staged prior to new home offerings. These points are discussed in the paragraphs immediately below.

New Supporting Development. A number of important developments are proposed for Columbia Point which, staged appropriately in relation to new housing, would have direct implications for residential marketability. Recommended staging for these developments is discussed specifically in a subsequent paragraph. The types of development proposed however, are as follows:

1. Regional Park and Waterside Recreation Facilities. This would consist of new bathing beaches located on the south side of the Point -- Savin Hill Cove. Provision for public and club areas would be made. In addition, active sport facilities including tennis courts, playgrounds and fields and fishing pier would be included.

2. Boating and Marina. Sizable dock and mooring areas would be provided. Rental boats for use in the bay would be available in connection with the marina operation.

3. Waterfront Parkway. A vehicular drive -- extending the existing Day Strandway -- along the water's edge would follow the perimeter of the Point as part of the proposed plan. This scenic drive would connect shore points on the downtown side of the Point as well as to the south. Promenades and lookout points for pedestrians would be provided.

4. New Public School. As part of the public facilities "package", a new elementary school would be provided on the Point, supplementing the expanded 10-room Dever school already located in the area.

These improvements would directly serve the needs of the proposed new development as well as indirectly stimulate it. A number of the facilities listed above are oriented to broader Boston area needs. The beaches, recreational facilities, marina and parkway would, together with recreation facilities already located to the north, make this area a unique, recreational center in the city of Boston. As a result, not only would they serve to bring people from elsewhere in the city to visit the Point and reduce the sense of present "isolation" from the rest of the city, but would also display the livability of this area.

The preceding facilities would be publicly initiated, built and operated. With the exception of the new school they would be built in response to needs which, although including the project area, would extend beyond it and so could appropriately be built early in the development sequence for the project. On this basis, these facilities could be used as "seed" devices to help create the appropriate setting for subsequent private investments in Point housing.

Other Projected Development. In addition to the existing commercial and institutional facilities located on the Point, further development is expected. This expansion would be carried out by private development organizations and would serve to increase the variety and extent of activities in the Point area. Discussed more completely in the staff report, the expected private development operations would include the following:

1. Family City. Located on Mount Vernon Street on the old Firestone site, Family City is programming a large shopping center catering to a full range of family needs. Included, according to our information, would be extensive food, variety, apparel and applicance lines as well as selected service units.

2. First National Bank. A data processing center is now under construction at this location.

3. Boston College High School. Serving the city-wide Catholic population, this already existing high school proposes an extension of its present facility accommodating 1,360 students, to a 1,500-1,600 student capacity.

4. Miscellaneous Units. In addition to the foregoing, a variety of new facilities -- both public and private -- will be locating along the northern tier of the Point. This includes such public facilities as the new MDC police station, Dever School and possible St. Christopher's Church expansions.

Proposed Commercial Facilities. Although the commercial units proposed for the project are analyzed in more specific detail subsequently, they should be mentioned at this point as supports for the proposed residential facilities. Included would be commercial units located in the residential area. These facilities, staged in relation to new residential construction, would -- even apart from the Family City development -- make more extensive neighborhood convenience shopping available to existing project residents as well as to residents in the newly proposed units. They would help create a community focal point and social center, especially for the teenage group. Similarly, a church facility which might be developed as part of the commercial area would also be an added plus in residential marketability.

MARKET AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

COLUMBIA POINT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Part B. Housing

Balancing the public housing units in numerical terms, the renewal plan proposes a total of 1,520 housing units for development on Columbia Point during the course of the program. These units would be located on a total of 60.3 acres. On the basis of specific unit types, the plan proposals can be set forth as follows:

Type of Units	Number Proposed
Row Housing	550 Units
Garden Apartments	480
Seven-story Apartments	490
Total	1,520 Units

Site Pluses and Minuses. Columbia Point at present offers a number of advantages as well as specific disadvantages in marketing new, privately-financed housing. Although the housing proposed for the renewal area must of necessity be developed in recognition of the site's limitations, it is possible to optimize its advantages and minimize its disadvantages. The basis for such an approach can best be seen in the factors influencing the area's potential for market acceptance of new housing.

On the plus side, the following factors can be identified:

1. Centrality. The Columbia Point site is located close to the core of the region, adjacent to South Boston and farther to the north, downtown Boston. Immediately to the west is the North Dorchester-Roxbury area and just beyond, Back Bay and Brookline. All of these sections with their extensive concentrations of population, jobs, shopping conveniences, recreational facilities and the full range of services and activities associated with well established neighborhoods, are within minutes of the Columbia Point site.

2. Accessibility. The street, thoroughfare and transportation system serving Columbia Point sections compares favorably with most Boston areas. Major north-south arteries include the Southeast Expressway with an interchange at the north end of Columbia Point; Morrissey Boulevard; and Dorchester Avenue. In an east-west direction, the area is served by Columbia Road and Savin Hill-Dudley. In the longer run, the Inner-Loop segments in the South Bay, South Boston and South Cove sections will also substantially benefit the Columbia Point area.

   The MTA services the area with a major radial link out the downtown -- the Ashmont line. The Columbia station on this line is located at

the north end of the Point near the intersections of Mount Vernon, Southeast Expressway and Morrissey Boulevard at Kosciuszko Circle. At the lower end of the Point there is another station located at Savin Hill Avenue and the Southeast Freeway. The proposed Ashmont extension of MTA and the possible revival of the Old Colony line for rapid transit use would also improve accessibility and the transportation service at the Point.

Despite the extensive transportation facilities in the vicinity, the generally held impression is that Columbia Point is inaccessible and remote. The previously-discussed proposal to extend the Day Strandway along the Columbia Point perimeter to Savin Hill at the south end would eliminate the present cul-de-sac effect of Mount Vernon Street into the area by linking it into the regional circulation system with improved connections at both ends.

3. Water View. Columbia Point juts into Dorchester Bay, forming with its north side one shore line of Dorchester Bay and Savin Hill Cove with its south side. The site offers an unobstructed view into Dorchester Bay, the harbor beyond and the off-shore islands, Thompson and Spectacle. Although lying relatively low,

Columbia Point provides one of a limited number of new opportunities within the city of Boston for a scenic, residential development program -- especially for middle-income markets.

4. Established Section. Already mentioned, adjacent Dorchester and Roxbury with populations exceeding 100,000 and homes in the tens-of-thousands are long-settled and established communities. Although sections within these communities presently suffer from problems of decline and change associated with their age (portions within them are presently designated for renewal programs) many parts are stable and of high quality. For the purposes of this report and market implications for new housing on Columbia Point however, the size and extent of the present housing occupancy in these adjacent communities itself testifies to their substantial acceptance by middle and lower-middle income groups.

On the negative side, a number of specific problems and restraints affect the potential housing market for new, private units at this location. These can be listed as follows:

1. Present pattern of development and land availability. A portion of Columbia Point on the bay side of Morrissey Boulevard has a history of semi-industrial development, as have sites lying bet-

ween Morrissey and Southeast Expressway. In recent years however, this pattern has shifted -- especially on the Bay side, to an institutional and commercial pattern compatible with sound and attractive residential uses. The original American Radiator-Firestone plant has been abandoned and is projected for retail development by the Family City Development Corporation, as already discussed. In the 1950's, the regional Boston College High School was constructed. A number of additional smaller facilities including WHDH, the Dickie-Raymond direct mail operation and the John Hancock agency have been established east of Morrissey. On the west, continuing a somewhat more industrial type of pattern, the Globe newspaper plant, Recording and Statistical Corporation, a Westinghouse service plant, a clothing manufacturing firm, as well as a First National Supermarket have been put in place.

Open land potentially available for new development covers portions of the Point on the bay side of existing development. Included is ground presently owned by the city of Boston for a dump and pumping station facility and to be replaced by 1965, according to our information; the Mile Road Corporation dump; and the Tomasello Company, presently inactive although operable.

Together these ownerships contain approximately 110 acres, not including area underwater up to the bulkhead line. Additional site area could of course be created by filling the area remaining to the bulkhead. These sites have been created largely by fill and present some foundation and building problems. This point is discussed more specifically in a subsequent paragraph.

2. Public housing. The existing Columbia Point project, built in the early 1950's, contains a total of 1,504 units with 384 in three-story and 1,120 units in seven-story structures. Located on a total area of 58 acres, it has been the subject of an intensive survey conducted by the ABCD organization. Among Boston public housing projects, this is one of the "least popular" in terms of tenant requests to occupy units although it has one of the lowest turnover rates. It stands alone as a residential use on Columbia Point at the present time. From a standpoint of new private housing markets on the Point, the public housing project carries with it many of the negative connotations traditionally associated with public housing in the community-at-large. This project in particular, because of its design, appearance and reputation -- whether accurate or inaccurate -- in our judgment constitutes the major obstacle to be overcome in "selling" this location to the private housing con-

sumer, specific cost factors aside. Income limits for admission to the project range from a low of $3,600 per year for one and two person families to $4,400 for seven or more person families. For those displaced by public action, these admission limits are set in the higher range from $4,500 to $5,500. Income eligibility for continued occupancy has been established in the range from $4,950 for one and two person families to $6,050 for seven or more person families. The actual median income for project occupants is approximately $3,000 per year. This figure is of course substantially lower than the city-wide average and the medians characteristic of the surrounding Dorchester areas. Median family size in the project is approximately 3.5 persons -- not dissimilar from the pattern in adjacent neighborhoods.

In an effort to improve the project -- even apart from what might be done in the surrounding area as part of a development program -- the housing authority has been analyzing the project and its deficiencies. The authority has also hired a planning consultant and architect who are responsible for making specific recommendations for project improvements.

3. Isolation. The peninsula shape of Columbia Point together with the "wall" of Morrissey Boulevard and Southeast Expressway at

the northern end has limited ingress and egress up to the present time to a single, dead-end road -- Mount Vernon Street. Even apart from practical questions of circulation, this single point of access has psychologically isolated the Point community from neighboring Dorchester areas. As mentioned previously, the plan proposes an extension of the Day Strandway around the peninsula's edge and establishment of a new connection into Savin Hill at the south end of the peninsula. This new system of circulation, together with the type and extent of public facilities proposed for development on the Point should, in our judgment, serve to overcome the present sense of isolation.

4. Building and foundation conditions. Subsoil condition and nature of fill pose some problems for new building programs on the Point. These issues were investigated in specific detail by a qualified engineering firm, Maurice A. Reidy, under contract to the Boston Redevelopment Authority. His findings have been developed and submitted in a separate report. Apart from his overall finding that the site can be successfully built as proposed under this plan, the specific economic implications -- especially as they relate to the cost of housing -- are of particular interest to this analysis. These points are discussed more specifically in the paragraphs which follow below.

Housing Marketability. The inherent advantages of the Columbia Point location -- its access, view and relation to existing communities -- combined with a carefully staged development program including construction of regional recreational facilities, waterside parkway, improved access as well as other supporting facilities, provide the potential for a marketable program of new, privately-financed housing construction. Essential to the success of new housing on Columbia Point however, would be an orientation to appropriate sectors of the housing market. The orientation of housing on Columbia Point in our judgment, should be initially to the lower middle-income rental sector; then to the lower middle-income ownership sector; and finally, upgraded somewhat to the middle-income rental and ownership markets. In each case, the lowest ranges attainable in the privately-financed sectors of the housing market should be sought with the objective of minimizing socio-economic "shift" from existing to new development at any one stage of the program.

> More specifically, the schedule of units, housing types, financing programs, tenure and other characteristics appropriate to the housing package on the Point are set forth immediately below.

Recommended Program. New Columbia Point housing should be developed in a three-phase sequence to follow through the approach suggested above. The recommended phases would relate directly to the three structure types proposed in the development plan. Timing and the relationships between housing and other plan

components are set forth in further detail in a later section.

The three phases in the 1,520 new units can be listed as follows:

1. Garden Apartments: We would recommend that the 480 garden apartment units be developed for rent under the 221d3 program in two stages of 200 units and 280 units, respectively. Rent levels in these units should generally range from $75 or $80 to $95-$100 for ones, twos and threes and follow the general design set forth in BRA prototype studies for units of this type.

   The total scale of the present 221d3 program in Boston is only some 3,000 units. This represents units scheduled for completion beginning in the current year up to 1967. The limited production under this program during the coming three or four year period -- with less than a thousand per year entering the market on the average -- together with the rent scale realizable with sub-market interest rates, would make Columbia Point units of this type so highly competitive in our opinion, that the stigma attached to the marketability of these units because of the existing housing project would be offset by the unique values made available. Of course, the inherent pluses of the Columbia Point location, the additional advantages of new regional recreational facilities, beach areas

and parkway, built into the project area prior to marketing of the recommended 221d3 units would also assist in enhancing their attractiveness.

We would expect -- based on present income limits under the 211d3 program for Boston -- that the median family income in these new units would be in the $5,500 to $7,000 range -- or between the levels of family income in nearby neighborhoods and incomes in the existing housing project.

2. Row Housing: The 550 row or town house units proposed in the renewal plan could we believe, best be developed as 221d3 cooperative or condominium units. A two-stage development, as in the preceding case, with 200 units and 250 units respectively would probably be most suitable.

The tenure pattern recommended for these structures would be in line with historic acceptance of row units for ownership in close-in Boston. In our judgment, ownership for a minimum of at least one-third of the total new units proposed under the plan would be appropriate to develop the kind of "committment" and stability sought as one of the prime objectives in the plan. Because we believe it would be more difficult to develop a market for ownership units initially, a rental approach for the garden units was recommended in the first stage.

The 221d3 cooperative or, as appropriate under Massachusetts law, a condominium development, is recommended to minimize monthly carrying charges. The same replacement cost which produced $75 to $95 economic rents in garden units, we believe, could be supported by monthly carrying charges approximately $15 per month lower on the average under the cooperative or condominium program. By contrast, a straight 220 sales program might result in monthly carrying charges -- even under a minimum housing solution -- which would be significantly higher than the 221d3 rentals previously recommended. We would not recommend a 220 sales approach without further detailed examination of the specific market response to the first stage 221d3 rental units.

3. Seven-Story Elevator Buildings: As a final stage in the housing development program for Columbia Point, we would recommend planning for elevator buildings approximately equal in height to those presently in the existing public housing project. The 490 units proposed under the plan in this section could be suitably staged in sections of 140 units and 350 units respectively in our preliminary judgment.

Although the density obtainable under the seven-story elevator approach and the visual impact of these structures in relation to

the public housing elevator buildings are important objectives, final determinations as to the potential for acceptance of these units can probably be made only following actual market experience in the preceding stages. We believe however, that a minimum 220 with rents not to exceed $28 per room per month and with a low room count per unit, would prove marketable on this site. Should a subsequent determination following Stage I and Stage II marketing experience prove negative, a new residential program for these sites could be prepared extending the sales or rental program under 221d3.

Although not involving construction of new housing, a program to convert to private ownership some of the existing PHA units in seven-story structures has been suggested. If carried out, one or more structures at the southern-most end of the existing project might be adapted to a cooperative or condominium program oriented to over-income tenants who wish to remain in the area. Admittedly experimental, this approach would have the advantage of pre-testing the acceptability of owner-occupancy at this location in elevator structures as well as provide a transition between proposed new elevator structures and the existing housing project. Should this program prove feasible in terms of housing

authority regulations, we would recommend that it be timed to precede the development of privately-financed elevator units on the site.

To summarize, the previous recommendations can be tabulated to show the overall housing program recommended for Columbia Point:

Type	Total Units	Tenure	Program	Sequence
1. Garden Apartments	480	Rental	221d3	#1A - 200 units #1B - 280
2. Row Housing	550	Ownership	221d3 Co-op. or Cond.	#2A - 200 #2B - 350
3. 7-Story Elevator Units 1/	490	Rental or Ownership	Minimum price 220 Co-op, or Cond.	#3A - 140 #3B - 350
Total New Units	1,520			

1/ Possible prior Co-op. for one or more existing PHA units at south end of project.

Extra Foundation Costs. Critical to feasibility of private housing development is the additional cost due to unusual foundation conditions on the Point. The scale of these costs will directly affect the rent level at which new units might be made available on this site. As previously stated, a report on foundation and subsoil conditions and the additional unit construction costs they might impose for various types of residential structures was prepared for BRA by Maurice A. Reidy, Engineers. This

report concluded that the Columbia Point site, although definitely buildable, would require more costly foundations than needed under ideal foundation conditions elsewhere in the Boston area. These ideal conditions were defined as "firm sand and gravel soils capable of supporting footing bearing pressures of three tons per square foot at a distance of four feet below grade."

Using the Reidy cost figures, calculations show that the extra monthly charge attributable to foundation "extras" in a 221d3 garden or row house unit would be approximately $5.75. This figure is based on an assumed two-story and basement frame unit with average size approximately 1,200 square feet in floor area. Construction was assumed to be reinforced concrete basement floor and wall structure, one-way slabs with center beams and walls at the perimeter. Piles would be 15-ton cast in place concrete, 20 feet long and cut off at grade 11. Specifically, the added cost for foundation work used was $1.26 per square foot measured against first and second floor living space, or 1,200 square feet. The $1,512 "extra" resulting was amortized over a 40 year term at three and three-eights percent interest available under the 221d3 program.

Finish grade was assumed to be at elevation 18.0 for these foundation calculations. Although portions of the Columbia Point site at the present time are substantially higher than this elevation (areas in the Mile Road Dump, for example, are at elevations 35-39), it was assumed that this excess fill would be removed in connection with site improvements prior to disposition under urban renewal. This

matter is discussed further in a subsequent section. If the fill removal were not undertaken as a project site improvement, an additional extra of approximately $1,000 per unit (or its equivalent in extra length of foundation support) in row house and garden types might result. Depending on actual cost, approximately an additional $3.80 per month in extra charges for occupants would be necessary.

> In the preceding calculations, extra foundation costs were "transferred" directly into building replacement costs on an incremental basis. Consequently, the rent or monthly charges would of course have to be proportionately increased. At the present time, 221d3 units can be produced in the Boston area at rents in the $75 to $95 range for one to three bedroom units according to our information. These are on ground sold at approximately $0.20 per square foot. Although the precise building specifications of these units and their foundation costs are not known, we have conservatively assumed that all of the extra foundation costs to elevation 18 -- but not fill removal costs -- would be ascribed to higher unit rents. On this basis, Columbia Point 221d3 units might be offered at $80 to $100 per month for ones, twos and three bedroom units. These fall within the ranges previously recommended as appropriate.

Seven story elevator structures were also analyzed for extra costs. Calculations here indicate that extra monthly charges of approximately $4.80 per unit might result. Section 220 financing was assumed in this analysis with individual residential units averaging 1,000 square feet each on a gross basis. Extra foundation costs would total $0.90 per square foot, according to the Reidy data. The resulting $900 total extra was amortized over a 40 year period at five and one-fourth percent interest and 0.5 percent mortgage insurance premium. As

in the previous case, fill removal costs were ascribed to project site improvements. However, because the density of seven story structures would be increased to a total of perhaps 30 units per acre or more, fill removal costs might typically be reduced to $500 or less per unit.

Absorption rates and timing. We believe that the minimum absorption likely under the 221d3 garden and row housing program on Columbia Point would be at the rate of 200 units per year. This absorption -- although conservative -- is projected for offering following installation and completion of the supporting facilities as outlined earlier in this report. The elevator structures under the 220 program, more conjectural in terms of marketability, have been projected at the minimum absorption of 140 units per stage. In this case, the minimum acceptable absorption would, in our judgment, be approximately this magnitude. An absorption rate lower than 140 units per year would not only reduce important economies of scale, but would also lose impact on the market.

Part C. Commercial Uses and Development Strategy

The plan sets aside an area of 2.5 acres located on Mount Vernon Street at the southeasterly edge of the existing public housing project adjacent to the proposed new housing section. Located on the site of the existing three-unit commercial facility, under the plan this area is reserved for neighborhood service and convenience commercial and church facilities.

Although the 38-acre Family City development, which would include a major food store and other facilities needed for a unified shopping center, is projected at the other end of the site, we believe that a small store grouping at this location would be an enhancement to the project as well as marketable from the BRA point-of-view. Of course, should the Family City development not go ahead, the neighborhood units proposed here would be essential to support the shopping needs of existing as well as proposed new residential units on the Point.

At the present time a total of 3,500 square feet of store area is provided in the existing three-unit structure. This total area is divided approximately equally between a restaurant; a superette or commissary; and a pharmacy. These same functions should be retained in any new retail grouping -- even if existing mer-

chants and/or building is not. Additional floor area amounting to 17,000 square feet of store area for a total of approximately 20,000 square feet should be planned, in our judgment. Included in this allocation of area might be a valet shop; washeteria; post office; variety and sundries unit, possibly as part of an expanded drug and pharmacy outlet; and similar units. If a parking ratio of approximately two to one is allowed, the total site area required for this operation would be 1.5 acres. Remaining would be an area of approximately one acre under the present allocation for a church facility.

Commercial Recreation Facilities. The proposed regional park and recreation area including beach, marina, strandway and active recreational facilities suggest an additional potential not specifically taken into account under the present planning proposal. This would be for a regionally-oriented commercial recreation complex. Included in this complex might be the following types of activity:

1. Year-round roller and ice skating
2. Family restaurant and short order eating facilities
3. Bowling center

These would be in addition to private club and marina areas already incorporated into the development area.

The accessibility of location, advertising value and prominence and proximity to water and beach facilities would help support the complex suggested by the

three facilities listed above. This type of development -- carried out with dignity and restraint -- could enhance the attractiveness and livability of the Columbia Point community. Restrictions on type of occupancy and character of development are critical here. If appropriate restrictions can be developed to insure the compatibility of commercial recreation units with the prime residential uses proposed elsewhere for the site, we would recommend allocation of five to ten acres for this purpose.

Overall Development Strategy

A three-stage development -- discussed in further detail in the staff planning report -- would be essential in order to achieve marketability in the residential sections of the Columbia Point site. In brief, these stages can be described as follows:

1. Stage I. This stage would involve the establishment of effective control or acquisition over the presently undeveloped areas of the site by an appropriate agency; establishment and stabilization of the new shoreline; construction of beach, bathing facilities and regional park and recreation facilities; and completion of the strandway. It would also be desirable if, during this stage, the Family City shopping development were undertaken.

2. Stage II. In this stage, construction of the first two phases in the housing development would be undertaken. Specifically, this would include garden and row house units. In addition, such supporting facilities as the school, neighborhood shops and improvements to the existing public housing project, as established by the Boston Public Housing Authority, should also be completed.

3. Stage III. In this stage, the public recreation as well as commercial recreation facilities should be completed. The final stage of housing development should be undertaken -- either in the elevator units previously indicated or, as appropriate, continuation of the sales program.

Use of Renewal Approaches. It has been assumed throughout this report, that renewal procedures would be applied to accomplish the development proposed for Columbia Point. A number of tools are available under the renewal program which in our judgment, makes its application essential for success in this operation.

Specifically, special assistance mortgages under FHA Section 220 would be available only in urban renewal project areas. The seven story apartment structure proposed for the Point would potentially be financed under this section with its benefits in the use of replacement cost rather than appraised value as a basis for mortgage calculations. Even though Section 221d3 financing would be available outside of designated project areas, critical advantages would be available in renewal. Even apart from fiscal benefits in non-cash contributions, project site improvements -- including fill removal -- could be carried as a project cost in order to keep potential rent or carrying charges at levels competitive with 221d3 operations elsewhere in the city. Finally, additional benefits in terms of possible write-downs between acquisition and improvement costs for the land and the disposition price would assist in keeping monthly rent and carrying charges to a minimum.

Should the project not proceed under urban renewal the liklihood of new residential construction on the Point in the forseeable future would be slight -- even with completion of the beach and recreation areas. More probable in our opinion, would be use of the open ground areas at the southerly edge of the site now in private hands for semi-industrial activities, possibly open-storage type operations. Ground cost coupled with improvement cost factors, it appears, would work against an intensive use of the ground or extensive coverage by buildings. Should this happen, not only would the potential "balance" of additional, privately-financed housing on the Point be lost, but the extension of industrial uses into these areas adjacent to the existing housing project might even harm it further. Zoning of the area on the Point so as to prohibit industrial uses we believe would not solve the development problems now posed by the Point.

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